

Storing Water

Having an ample supply of clean water is a top priority in an emergency. The following guidelines will help you ensure that members of your household have sufficient water in an emergency situation:

- Keep at least a three-day supply of water, that is, a minimum of three gallons per person. It is strongly recommended that you store more if possible. Each person should have one-half gallon per day for drinking and one-half gallon for cooking and sanitation. A normally active person needs to drink at least one-half gallon of water each day. Hot environments and intense physical activity can double that amount. Children, nursing mothers, and ill people will also need more. Be sure to include drinking and clean-up water for your pets. The amount needed will depend on their sizes and the conditions. Remember that pets often drink more water than usual when under stress.
- To prepare the safest and most reliable emergency supply of water, purchase commercially bottled water. Keep bottled water in its original container and do not open it until you need to use it.
- Store bottled water in the original sealed container and observe the expiration or “use by” date.

• If you are preparing your own containers of water, follow the directions below for selecting, cleaning, and filling the containers with water:

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- **Purchase food-grade, water-storage containers** from surplus or camping supplies stores to use for water storage.
- If you chose to use your own storage containers, chose two-liter, plastic soda bottles—not plastic jugs or cardboard containers that have had milk or fruit juice in them. Milk protein and fruit sugars cannot be adequately removed from these containers and provide an environment for bacterial growth when water is stored in them.
- Do not use glass containers because they can break and are heavy.
- Do not use cardboard containers, because they can leak easily. These containers are not designed for long-term storage of liquids.
- If storing water in plastic soda bottles or food-grade, water-storage containers, follow these steps:
 - **Thoroughly clean them with dishwashing soap and water, and rinse them completely so there is no residual soap.**
 - **Sanitize them and their caps by adding a solution of 1 teaspoon of non-scented liquid household chlorine bleach to a quart of water.** Swish the sanitizing solution in the containers and caps so that it touches all interior surfaces. After sanitizing the containers and caps, thoroughly rinse out the sanitizing solution with clean water.

- **To fill water containers:**

- Fill them to the top with regular tap water. If the tap water has been commercially treated from a water utility with chlorine, you do not need to add anything else to the water to keep it clean. If the water you are using comes from a well or water source that is not treated with chlorine, add two drops of non-scented liquid household chlorine bleach to the water.
- Tightly close the containers using the original caps. Be careful not to contaminate the caps by touching the inside of them with your fingers.
- Place a date on the outside of the containers so that you know when you filled them. Store them in a cool, dark place.
- Replace the water every six months if not using commercially bottled water.
- Store your three-day supply in a handy place. You need to have water packed and ready in case there is no time to fill water bottles when disaster strikes.